

A Cut Above The Rest

On a warm spring night in Greenbrier County, hundreds of people had their checkbooks and credit cards in hand to spend on the future of farming. The annual Greenbrier/Monroe Ham, Bacon and Egg Show and Sale is one of the most successful in the state. This year was no exception.

The event featured FFA students and 4-H members from Greenbrier and Monroe Counties. More than 200 lots were up for sale. “The bidding is fast and furious at times,” explained Beth Massey, the FFA instructor at Greenbrier East High School. “The quality of the product this year is just phenomenal!”

Abby McCutcheon, a member of Greenbrier East FFA, took home Grand Champion Bacon. Weighing in at 10.18 lbs., the high school freshman walked away with \$865 at the end of the night. “The pigs I had this year didn’t have very good hams but they had really good bacon. It just depends on the hog you get if you’re getting a ham hog or a bacon hog.”

McCutcheon will use that money to pay off the cost of her pig and put the rest into her next hog or possibly a new saddle for her horse.

The winner of the Reserve Champion Eggs, Levi LaRue, earned \$550. This was his third time showing at the sale through 4-H. “I feel pretty good about it because I’ve never placed in this show,” explained the Eastern Greenbrier Middle School 6th grader. “Every time my chickens laid eggs, we tried to get the freshest ones. We also gave them feed with minerals in it. I think that made the difference!”

Massey stressed the kids put a lot of time and effort into their 4-H and FFA projects. “They put in hours and hours between feeding and cleaning their pens. It takes time, commitment and dedication. For the kids, it pays off when you come here and the community supports you like our community does.”

One of the best lessons the kids are learning, according to Massey, is entrepreneurship. Not only did they raise their animals but they also raised interest in the show. “Our kids have gone out and invited people to the show. A lot of them are folks they’ve bought their feed from or that they may bank with or their parents deal with on a business level. These people come out and support the children.”

This year’s sale brought in a grand total of \$108,660. Most of that money went directly back to the students. There is a nominal fee to help pay for the sale.

“We hear a lot of people complain, ‘Kids don’t want to work.’ But that’s not what is happening. These kids are putting in hundreds of hours to develop their businesses. It’s exciting to see it happening!”



From L to R: Ryan Vaughan, Grand Champion Ham; Abby McCutcheon, Grand Champion Bacon; Erik Ford, Grand Champion Eggs; Tristan Morgan, Reserve Champion Ham; J.T. McCutcheon, Reserve Champion Bacon; Levi LaRue, Reserve Champion Eggs.